to any estimate. However, the value of old seized by the Customs authorities during the years 1983 to 198 (upto September) is given below:—

Year	Value (Rs. in crores)
1983 . . .	4·18
1984 . . .	10·24
1985 . . .	51·89
1986 (upto September) . . .	38·95 (provisional)

Bad debts of banks

15. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA :
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR :
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the annual amount of bad debts of banks at the beginning and at the end of the Sixth Plan period;

(b) whether arrangements exist for proper auditing of accounts of all the branches of banks by statutory auditors appointed by RBI;

(c) whether it is a fact that in many bank branches the same authority who had sanctioned the loans decides the writing-off bad debts; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI) : (a) According to the forms of Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account presdribed in the Third Schedule of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, which all the banks are required to follow strictly, the banks are given statutory protection from disclosing the quantum of bad and doubtful debts for which provisio nis made to the satisfaction of their statutory auditors. Hence the quantum of bad debts cannot be disclosed.

(b) In so far as audit of the branches of commercial banks are concerned, these are done in accordance with the various statutes governing the particular bank. In so far as 20 nationalised banks are concerned the existing practice is that all branches having an outstanding advance of Rs. 50 lakhs and above are compulsorily audited by external statutory auditors every year. In addition 1|3rd of the remaining branches are also taken up for statutory audit by external statutory auditors by rotation. The State Bank and the seven associate banks have also been requested to introduce the same system in a phased manner. In addition, banks have the discretion to get any of the branches audited by the external statutory auditors wherever a need is felt.

In so far as the private sector banks are concerned, auditing of branches by external statutory auditors is done in accordance with the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 read with Companies Act, 1956 and relevant rules framed thereunder.

(c) and (d) All banks have their own well laid down procedures for writing off advances which are considered bad. Banks write off advances normally after exhausting all avenues of recovery and generally after obtaining the approval of Board of Directors except in cases where the powers have been delegated to lower functionaries. Banks have been advised by Reserve Bank of India that wherever the power to write off has been delegated, it should be ensured that authority who sanction the adance in question does not write off the same in his individual capacity.

Claims pending with LIC and GIC

16. SHRI KAILASHPATI MISHRA:
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of claims pending with LIC and General Insurance

Corporation at present and the amount involved; and

(b) whether Government propose to issue instructions on humanitarian grounds to expedite (within a month or so) those cases where claimants are orphans or widows with little support?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI) : (a) As on 31-3-86, 77929 maturity claims amounting to Rs. 29.74 crores and 23884 death claims amounting to Rs. 36.71 crores were pending with LIC. As on 31.12.86 there were 476129 claims amounting to Rs. 1122.8 crores pending with GIC and its Subsidiaries.

(b) Both LIC and GIC have taken a series of measures for expeditious settlement of all claims. The matter is under continual review by the Government. The progress of settlement of outstanding claims by LIC and GIC is closely monitored and reviewed at periodic intervals. Appropriate advice and directions are issued by Government to LIC and GIC from time to time for speedy settlement of all categories of claims. Government have, however, no proposal at present to issue separate instructions in respect of the claims of orphans and widows only.

Housing Finance Schemes pending for clearance

17. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what are the details of the projects in the fields of housing finance and urban improvement submitted for approval by the Ministry of Urban Development;

(b) whether it is a fact these projects have been pending clearance in the Finance Ministry for more than six months; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI) : (a) No project is pending clearance in this Ministry.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Trade deficit

18. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been any improvement in the trade deficit of India during the first six months of the current financial year;

(b) whether any reviews has been made to improve the trade deficit position; and

(c) if so, what is the outcome of the review and what measures are being taken to minimise the trade dificit?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR) : (a) The latest provisional figures of India's foreign trade available for the first quarter of the current financial year i.e. April-June. 1986 place India's trade deficit at Rs. 1623.86 crores which is lower than the trade deficit of Rs. 2109.10 crores in the corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) and (c) The foreign trade situation of India is under constant review. With a view to reducing trade deficit, vigorous export promotional measures have been taken during the recent past. These include increasing our exports, easier access to machinery and raw materials to major export sectors, upgradation of technology, modification and periodic revision of our industrial policies etc. Efforts are also being made to step up our indigenous production of importables during the Seventh Five Year Plan period, particularly in the sphere of bulk imports.

Pak President's Statement on Siachen Glacier

19. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the President of Pakistan has recently admitted that Siachen Glacier was not part of Pakistan; and

(b) what is the present position of negotiations between India and Pakistan